

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 192106
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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APPROVED BY EA - MR. HOLBROOKE
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-----018712 291727Z /42

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 192106

NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR MURPHY FROM HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: RP

SUBJECT: MRS. MARCOS' VISIT TO WASHINGTON

1. MRS. MARCOS' VISIT TO WASHINGTON HAD ITS UPS AND DOWNS, BUT MORE OF THE LATTER THAN THE FORMER. SHE WAS TREATED VERY ROUGHLY DURING HER APPEARANCE BEFORE THE GROUP OF CONGRESSMEN THAT SHE SAW. SINCE SHE CHOSE TO TAKE ON HER STRONGEST ADVERSARIES, STARTING WITH THE DRAFTERS OF THE LETTER TO MARCOS LAST MAY, SHE SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN SOME CREDIT FOR COURAGE, BUT THIS, IT TURNED OUT, CAME ONLY FROM THREE MEMBERS--WRIGHT, ZABLOCKI, AND WOLFF. THE OTHERS GAVE HER QUITE A ROUGH TIME, AND WHEN I MET HER THE NEXT DAY, SHE SAID THAT IT WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT MEETING SHE HAD EVER HAD. WOLFF SAID THAT SHE ACTUALLY WAS IN TEARS AT ONE POINT. SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FELT THAT
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IT WAS USEFUL FOR HER TO HEAR FIRST HAND THEIR CONCERNS; BUT SHE SEEMED SHAKEN IN A WAY WHICH I DO NOT THINK WILL ULTIMATELY PROVE TO BE PRODUCTIVE. IN DEFENDING HER GOVERNMENT MRS. MARCOS PUT HEAVY STRESS ON THE ALLEGED COMMUNIST AFFILIATIONS OF THE PEOPLE WHOSE NAMES WERE BEING RAISED BY THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS-ESPECIALLY MRS. HERRERA AND MRS. PLANAS. I AM TOLD IT WAS NOT A

CONVINCING PERFORMANCE.

6. I HAVE NOT MADE A MEMCON OF THIS MEETING BEYOND WHAT IS IN THIS CABLE. YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF THESE MATTERS, BUT I DO NOT SEE ANY VALUE IN DISSEMINATING THEM WIDELY. NONE OF THESE VIEWS ARE NEW AND THEY TEND TO BE VERY PERSONAL, BUT YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF WHAT HAPPENED IN WASHINGTON AS YOU PROCEED IN MANILA. I SUSPECT THAT WE WILL BE HEARING MORE. I WOULD STRESS THAT SHE CHOSE A HOSTILE GROUP, AND APPARENTLY HANDLED HERSELF UNEVENLY. THIS MAY FUEL THE VERY FIRES IN CONGRESS SHE THOUGHT SHE MIGHT BANK BY TAKING THEM ON FRONTALLY. IN ANY CASE, I AM SURE SHE WILL CONCLUDE THAT THINGS HAVE CHANGED IN THE CONGRESS AND THE UNITED STATES, BUT I AM FAR LESS CONFIDENT THAT SHE WILL DRAW THE PROPER CONCLUSIONS. THERE WAS A SAD, ALMOST TRAGIC QUALITY TO HER PERFORMANCE, AND IF, AS REPORTED, SHE IS INCREASING HER ROLE AND INFLUENCE IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE PHILIPPINES, IT CAN ONLY LEAD TO MORE DIFFICULT TIMES AHEAD. INCIDENTALLY, I WAS STRUCK AGAIN BY THE EXTREME INEPTNESS OF THE PEOPLE AROUND HER, WHO SEEM INCAPABLE OF EVEN PUTTING TOGETHER A SIMPLE SCHEDULE OR GETTING A MESSAGE RIGHT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, CAT-B, MINISTERIAL VISITS, TRAVEL REPORTS, MEETINGS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, US CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE192106
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RHOLBROOKE:CB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978076/aaaaaeot.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: ab039e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2006124
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MRS. MARCOS' VISIT TO WASHINGTON
TAGS: PGOV, MASS, SHUM, OVIP, RP, US, (MARCOS, IMELDA), (MONDALE, WALTER F)
To: MANILA
Type: TE
vdkgwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ab039e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014